



Transportation

February 2016 Newsletter

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Division II

COUNTIES SERVED | Alleghany, Ashe, Avery,
Caldwell, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes, Yadkin

NCDOT Works Through Winter Weather

Statewide, NCDOT employees worked night and day during a storm that brought snow, sleet, freezing rain and ice across North Carolina Jan. 22 through Jan. 24. As of Feb. 1, over 2,275 employees across North Carolina spread



over 2.2 million **NCDOT crews and equipment made their way** gallons of brine, **from Pasquotank County to Asheville during the** with 1,604 **storm.**

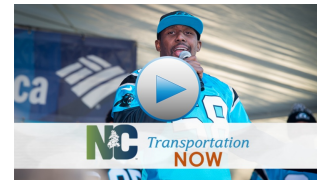
NCDOT

trucks/ graders and 665 contractor trucks. Additionally, they used over 75,000 tons of salt and over 27,000 tons of sand/salt mix.

Crews worked 12-hour alternating shifts throughout the storm and over the weekend, plowing roads, sawing and clearing fallen trees from roads and salting bridges and overpasses throughout the state.

Places in eastern counties that saw lesser impacts from the storm even sent crews to help harder hit areas, sharing resources and helping clear roadways in the western part of the state. Maintenance crews from Washington and Pasquotank counties arrived in the Asheville area Saturday night to assist with response efforts there. Twelve trucks from Sampson

Stay Connected



N.C. Transportation
Now

On the most recent episode of N.C. Transportation Now: the Division of Aviation provides a one-stop shop for North Carolina drone operators, NCDOT seeks new partners for its 2016 Watch for Me NC Campaign, the Division of Motor Vehicles' new mobile office hits the road, and NCDOT reminds people to not drink and drive for Super Bowl Sunday.

County arrived in Raleigh Sunday, and NCDOT transferred additional equipment from the coastal area to Durham County. The NCDOT State Farm Safety Patrol had helped more than 200 disabled motorists and assisted in 215 wrecks statewide as of Sunday morning.

For more information about how NCDOT works before, during and after the storm, [click here](#).

Weather Hampering Lane Shift Plan for U.S. 321 Project in Blowing Rock

When Mother Nature finally cooperates, the contractor for the U.S. 321 widening project in Blowing Rock is planning to implement a major traffic shift for the project.

It will split traffic just north of West Cornish Drive and then merge lanes back together near U.S. 321 Business/South Main Street. The split means north and southbound traffic will each be limited to their respective outside lanes.

The split will allow the contractor to close off the median and inside lanes in both directions. Then it will continue construction on the median, including the designated crossovers and the remaining median curbs and gutters.

As has been the plan since the project was designed, the temporary access points currently being used through this area to allow left turns will be permanently closed off as part of this work. Traffic will instead be directed to designated crossovers to allow traffic to turn left.

It was hoped the shift would have been made as early as Monday, Feb. 8. Unfortunately, more winter weather with extremely cold temperatures in the forecast delayed that move as crews were unable to put down pavement markings and set the barriers to separate traffic. When the weather improves, the project will move ahead.

Drivers can expect to deal with a similar traffic shift between West Cornish Road and the Tanger Outlets shopping area later in the project.

Drivers should also allow extra time to get to their destinations as a result of the new pattern. They are urged to use extreme caution while traveling through the work zone for their own safety, as well as their passengers or travelers in other vehicles, and for the construction crews working close to the roadway.

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N.C. Transportation
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The \$66-million project is widening U.S. 321 from Blackberry Road in Caldwell County through Blowing Rock to the Tanger Outlet Center just north of U.S. 221 in Watauga County. Improvements include building additional through lanes, turning lanes at selected locations and straightening curves to provide a safer road. The project will also enhance pedestrian connectivity from U.S. 321 to downtown Blowing Rock.

When the Blowing Rock portion of the project is finished, which is projected to be this summer, these improvements to increase the roadway's vehicle capacity will make the road safer by improving traffic flow and reducing congestion.

Crews in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Caldwell, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes and Yadkin Counties Respond to Winter Weather

January brought the season's first significant round of winter weather to Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Caldwell, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes and Yadkin counties. Snowfall totals across the division ranged from six to more than 20 inches of snow and ice. While this was good news for the ski slopes, it was not-so-good news for the N.C. Department of Transportation's maintenance crews who were responsible for clearing nearly 11,000 lane miles of roads across the division.

Before the storm, local maintenance crews completed anti-icing operations, spreading brine along major routes such as Interstate 77, U.S. 421 and U.S. 321. More than 200 employees, operating about 150 pieces of equipment, worked throughout the storm to clear the roads. They used more than 9,300 tons of salt, and nearly 2,900 tons of a salt and sand mixture to help melt the snow and ice and provide traction.

Fortunately, the snow was a light and dry, which prevented it from sticking and eliminated issues with downed trees and power lines. The foothill counties received more sleet and ice mixed with the snow. Due to traffic and the low temperatures - single digits in some areas - over the first part of the weekend, this mixture formed a hard bond with the pavement in these areas, making it more challenging to clear from the roadways, which often needed more than a few passes of a plow truck to be cleared. That in turn meant a longer time to get to secondary roads.

Unfortunately more snow and very bitter temperatures are forecast for the first half of February, so crews will be back on the roads again.

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